

# NEWS



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## MIAMI TOWNSHIP • CLERMONT COUNTY, OHIO

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### **Miami Township welcomes one of region's first Community Emergency Response Team (CERT)**

MIAMI TOWNSHIP -- What if a tornado touched down in Miami Township and flattened homes in a residential area, killing or injuring many? Would Miami Township have sufficient emergency personnel available to handle a disaster of such magnitude?

Under such circumstances, the Miami Township Fire & EMS would be stretched beyond its limits. Obviously in this disastrous situation, quick response to everyone's needs would no longer be possible. But thanks to a new program being offered in Miami Township by its Board of Trustees and Fire Department, some citizens are being trained to better respond to an emergency or disaster.

Miami Township Firefighter/Paramedic Jeff Childers is taking the lead in training new citizen teams who will support the efforts of first responders. These Community Emergency Response Teams (CERT) will consist of individuals who have 20 hours of training on disaster preparedness, basic disaster medical operations, fire safety, and training in light search and rescue.

"After the event of September 11, 2001, President Bush called on citizens to volunteer and assist during disasters," said Chief James Whitworth. "The CERT program trains citizens to help themselves and their neighbors until the Township's emergency services can take over.

The class also is an excellent way for citizens to work directly with emergency responders, helping citizens to understand and appreciate that good training is critical to effective and accurate response and what the Fire & EMS Department does and what services the department can supply.

“Miami Township is no different than thousands of other communities in that we are prepared for everyday-type emergencies, but are not staffed for a large-scale event where dozens of homes are destroyed,” Childers said. Depending on the damage in the area, emergency responders may not get outside assistance quickly, and it will be important that citizens can help themselves, he said.

Besides “book learning,” the seminar includes a simulated disaster situation in which participants practice skills learned in the course. Students are trained to handle multiple injuries and make judgments about the seriousness of injuries, learn how to keep themselves safe, extinguish small fires, and render the scene as safe as possible until more help arrives.

One goal of the local Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) is to provide trained citizens in every neighborhood in Miami Township. During an emergency, these team members can provide immediate assistance to victims, lead spontaneous volunteers at a disaster site, and provide important help to the Township’s emergency first responders.

For more information contact Firefighter/Paramedic Jeff Childers at 248-3709.

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